

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 EA-11 IO-13 ADP-00 EB-11 COME-00 STR-08

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AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

USMISSION GENEVA

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E.O.: 11652: N/A

TAGS: EFIN, PINT

SUBJ: SOCIALIST PARTY LEADER WARNS AGAINST TRADE TALKS

POUCHED: BORDEAUX, LYON, MARSEILLE, MARTINIQUEN NICE,
STRASBOURG

REF: PARIS 18522

1. IN A WELL-PUBLICIZED PRESS CONFERENCE JULY 12, SOCIALIST PARTY
SECRETARY GENERAL FRANCOIS MITTERAND URGED THAT FRANCE BOYCOTT

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THE "NIXON ROUND" TRADE NEGOTIATIONS TALKS IN TOKYO THIS FALL.
ARGUING THAT TRADE NEGOTIATION BETWEEN US AND EUROPE IS NOT IN

ITSELF A BAD THING. MITTERRAND ADDED: "BUT ON THE CONDITION THAT IT IS AN HONEST EXCHANGE." HE ACCUSED THE US OF PLANNING FOR THE NEGOTIATIONS WITH A "WAR-LIKE MENTALITY." "IF THE AMERICANS DELIBERATELY LET THEIR MONEY DEPRECIATE," MITTERRAND CONTINUED, "IT IS IN ORDER TO WIN NEW MARKETS FOR THEIR ECONOMY AND TO BREAK UP THE COMMON MARKET."

2. MITTERRAND URGED THAT FRANCE MEET WITH ITS EC PARTNERS "TO FIND OUT IF IT IS A COMMUNITY THAT WILL NEGOTIATE IN TOKYO OR SIMPLY A COLLECTION OF COUNTRIES TIED TOGETHER BY A VAGUE TREATY." CRITICIZING GOF POLICY TOWARDS NEGOTIATIONS AND THE COMMUNITY, MITTERRAND SAID: "IT IS A MIDDLE OF THE ROAD POLICY. THE GOVERNMENT SEES THE OBJECTIVE BUT DOES NOT HAVE THE WILL TO REALIZE IT."

3. TAKING A PAGE FROM GAULLIST RHETORIC, MITTERRAND CLAIMED THAT FRANCE HAS A PARTICULAR ROLE TO PLAY IN EUROPE. HE SAID: "FRENCH POSITIONS OFTEN HAVE BEEN DETERMINANT. WHY SHOULD THAT NOT STILL BE THE CASE TODAY? I DON'T KNOW WHETHER OUR PLANS REMAIN VAST, BUT IT IS CLEAR TODAY THAT OUR IDEAS AND OUR POLICIES ARE SMALL."

4. THE PRESS CONFERENCE FOLLOWED SHORTLY AFTER A LETTER MITTERRAND SENT TO PRIME MINISTER MESSMER. THE LETTER, SUBSEQUENTLY MADE PUBLIC, TOOK THE SAME LINE AS MITTERRAND TOOK IN HIS PRESS CONFERENCE ON TRADE AND INTERNATIONAL MONETARY QUESTIONS. MESSMER REPLIED TO MITTERRAND IN A LETTER MADE PUBLIC JULY 13 THAT HE WOULD REPLY IN DEPTH IN THE NEAR FUTURE TO THE QUESTIONS HE RAISED "ON THIS IMPORTANT SUBJECT."

5. COMMENT: MITTERRAND'S PRESS CONFERENCE REMARKS ARE PART OF HIS CONTINUING EFFORT TO REPRESENT HIMSELF AS THE OPPOSITIONS' NUMBER ADMITTEDLY TOUGHER AND MORE DRAMATICALLY STATED, BUT NONETHELESS SIMILAR TO ONE SPOKESMAN. BY TAKING A POSITION, LINE RECENTLY TAKEN BY GISCARD D'ESTAING AND OTHER GOF SPOKESMEN (REF-TEL), MITTERRAND HOPES TO CONVINCE THE FRENCH PUBLIC THAT SOCIALIST OPPOSITION IS NOT ALWAYS NEGATIVE AND THAT HE IS CAPABLE OF PUTTING FRENCH NATIONAL INTEREST ABOVE PARTISANSHIP. HE EMPHASIZED, HOWEVER, THAT THE SOCIALISTS REMAIN DEEPLY OPPOSED TO GOF POLICIES AND APPROACH IN GENERAL. IT IS ALSO PROBABLY TRUE, HOWEVER, BOTH THAT MITTERRAND GENUINELY FEELS THAT FRANCE AND LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
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EUROPE ARE MAKING A MISTAKE IN AGREEING TO THE MTN'S UNDER PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES AND THAT MITTERRAND IS CASHING IN ON AN ISSUE WHICH HE KNOWS WILL WIN SUPPORT FROM A BROAD SEGMENT OF FRENCH PUBLIC.

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